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January 7, 1975

Lt. Gen. Vernon Walters
 Deputy Director
 Central Intelligence Agency
 Washington, D.C.

Dear General Walters:

I want you to know how much I appreciate your taking the time from your busy schedule to come to Oklahoma City to talk to our Rotary Club. I only hope that your message will wake some people up and give them the ammunition that they need to inform their other fellow citizens about the dangers we face in today's world. As you can see, the message that you gave must have struck a chord with many of the people there and I just pray that it won't roll off their shoulders and be forgotten but that rather it will get them to talking with their fellow citizens, as this is a prominent group of leaders in the community and the nation and many of them if they so chose could be very influential in getting your message across.

I was greatly embarrassed that many of the people that I had invited to the reception for you after your speech did not show up in time to visit with you. This event was planned at the last minute as I did not know how long we would have after your talk when I first invited you. However, I tried to invite a group of prominent people in influential areas who do speak up and talk about the things they believe in, to come and visit with you, and I was greatly embarrassed and distressed that more of them did not show up in time. I hope you will accept my apologies on this matter.

Enclosed is an editorial that was written as a result of your talk with John Couston Curry so you can be assured your message received a far broader audience than rotary. Also none of the muckracking questions that were asked by a TV representative were shown on TV but rather a picture of you saying "we have the finest, most dedicated Intelligence Service in the World" etc. The coverage was very favorable on TV.

If I can ever be of any further service to you or to the Agency, please let me know as I am at your service. Once again I have heard many people remark on what a fine and informative talk you made.

Sincerely yours,



Ellis Edwards

EE/me

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THE DAILY OKLAHOMAN

Wednesday, January 7, 1976 27

Not True, Says Director

Army Lt. Gen. Vernon Walters, deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency, asserted in a speech in Oklahoma City Tuesday that no one was ever assassinated by a CIA agent or as the result of CIA plans.

Walters, speaking before the Rotary Club of Oklahoma City, charged that CIA critics have treated revelations of past discussions about proposed assassinations as if they were accepted CIA plan.

Attempts on the lives of foreign leaders were merely among things proposed to the CIA, but were never adopted, he said.

Walters dismissed the alleged assassination ideas as "ancient history" in terms of how much has happened on the international scene since.

Walters also defended the CIA's past experimentation in the area of chemical warfare.

He said the agency developed and stockpiled lethal toxins for experi-

mental purposes after some emigres from Communist countries were killed in Europe by strangers who brushed against them in crowded places.

The agency believed it important to determine what kind of poisons were used, how they were used and how Americans could be protected from such death attempts. He said this occurred more than 20 years ago.

Walters explained the CIA's experimentation with mind-altering drugs as a reaction to publicly televised confessions of such prominent Communist resisters as Cardinal Mindszenty.

He said agency officials were convinced that the resisters had been subjected to some form of chemical brainwashing because some of the same individuals had endured severe Nazi torture without breaking.

Walters said the recent criticism has hurt the CIA but the agency has managed to maintain its function.

The Self-Destruct Scheme

FICTIONAL spies and sleuths abound in the world of television and paperback books, each with his own distinctive device that sets him apart from ordinary men and women as an evil genius. But there is almost no common ground between these supersleuths and the intelligence workers of the real world.

The impressive fact about our intelligence agencies is not that they invent and use diabolical devices, which they do not, but that they utilize the most modern technology and many long years of specialized study to produce analyses of events and capabilities on which nations base their policies. Of the two, while technology is important, the long years of study are the major factors in the excellence of American intelligence work.

Those were some of the facts behind the presentation Lt. Gen. Vernon Walters made to the Oklahoma City Rotary Club Tuesday, in which he took the recent attacks on the Central Intelligence Agency, one by one, and answered each by putting the criticism alongside the facts.

Walters cited the charges stemming from revelations that some 15 years ago some CIA personnel seriously contemplated attempting the assassination of Fidel Castro. He reminded his audience that at the time Castro was shooting thousands of Cubans in the stadium, on live television, every day or so, and that many Americans found this a disturbing thing to have on our doorstep. But he made the telling point

that consideration did not result in action—no one was assassinated.

The infamous toxins, which the CIA itself recently revealed to Congress, were developed when the agency wanted to learn how the Russians were killing emigres who became bones in the Communist throat—that was more than 20 years ago now—and developed the reported poisons to test their effectiveness, and to learn if there was a way to protect our own people from them.

The drugs which the CIA tested were a part of a broad national effort to learn more about such mind-bending agents, when they were new to Americans, including the medical professions. That came in the wake of the Korean War experience, and the degradations of such courageous men as Cardinal Mindszenty.

These efforts to learn more about our avowed adversaries in the world and their person-to-person weapons of war are being used today to pillory the entire intelligence establishment. Yet they occurred almost a generation ago, before the present CIA leadership was even involved at the agency.

In keeping up a drumroll of such criticism, which paints the CIA as a nest of terrifying threats to our freedom, some of its critics seem to hope it will become one of those TV "self-destruct" mechanisms, and disappear. But the CIA's service is so vital that if it did not exist today, we would have to invent it. Its mission, after all, is to ensure that there will be a United States in the future.